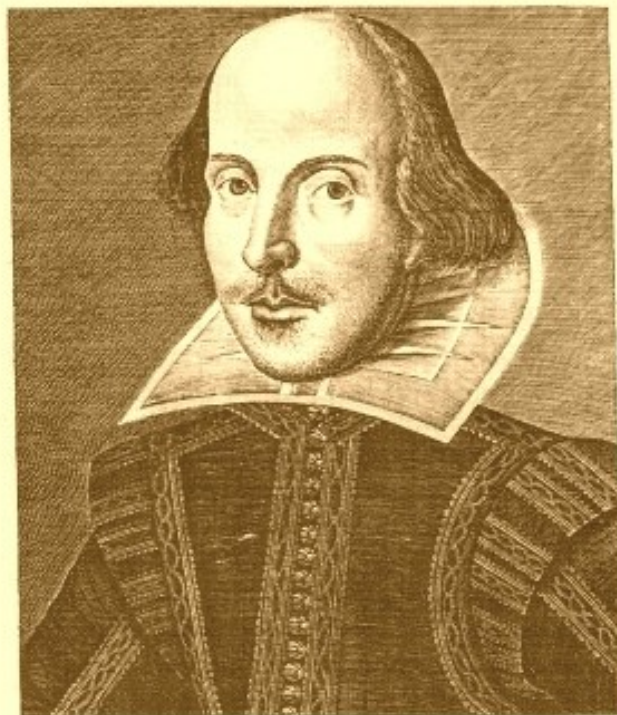


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KILODNEYS
Translations of Wm. Shakespeares
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to Modern English - for contemporary
readers and performers

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Shakespeare For White Trash: As You Like It

Classic literature translated into Modern English by Crad Kilodney

October 7, 2010 – Author’s Note:

“Shakespeare For White Trash” is a series of condensed rewrites designed to make Shakespeare understandable and enjoyable to those who have little or no knowledge of him. The plots and characters are unchanged, but everything else has been radically restyled. Read my versions and you’ll be a Shakespeare fan forever!

These plays are intended to be performed, as well as read.

Main Characters

Duke Senior

Duke Frederick — younger brother of Duke Senior

Rosalind — daughter of Duke Senior

Celia — daughter of Duke Frederick

Amiens and Jaques — lords attending on Duke Senior

Le Beau — a courtier (person belonging to the court) of Duke Frederick

Oliver, Orlando, and Jaques — sons of Sir Rowland de Boys (in some texts spelled “de Bois”. This Jaques does not appear until the very end, so don’t confuse him with the other Jaques.)

Charles — a wrestler

Touchstone — Frederick’s court jester (fool)

Adam and Dennis — servants to Oliver de Boys

Sir Oliver Martext — a vicar

Corin and Silvius — shepherds

Phoebe — a shepherdess

Audrey — a goatherd

William — a country boy

Hymen — the god of marriage (in some productions, one of the other characters in disguise, but not in this version)

Gist of the story: Duke Frederick has usurped his older brother, Duke Senior, who has gone into exile in the Arden Forest, taking many followers with him. His daughter, Rosalind, has stayed behind because of her devotion to her cousin Celia. Meanwhile, Oliver de Boys has been very bad to his brother Orlando. Orlando falls in love with Rosalind, but she is banished by Frederick. Celia and Touchstone go with her. Then Orlando must flee from his brother Oliver. The rest of the play takes place in Arden Forest. Orlando is searching for Rosalind, but she is now disguised as a man (Ganymede). Phoebe falls in love with Ganymede, spurning the affections of Silvius. In the end, four couples get married, and all the estranged brothers make peace. Shakespeare lets Rosalind have the last word in the epilogue, but Touchstone gets the funniest lines. (The play takes place in France, but the Arden Forest is not the Ardennes Forest. It's a fictitious forest deriving its name from the Arden Forest of Warwickshire, England. Another point: Directors have two options with the character Hymen. The first option is to have Amiens or another available character come in as Hymen in disguise; the second option is to have an entirely new player present him — someone not seen before by the audience. The latter option is more appealing, and I have written the ending accordingly.)

Act 1, Scene 1. *Outside of Oliver's house. Orlando and Adam come in. (Adam is an old man.)*

Orlando: Adam, you know why I'm so unhappy. My father left Oliver in full control of his estate, including my share. He's supposed to be taking care of me, but he treats me like dirt. Jaques is all right. He's away at university getting a good education. But not me. Oh, no. I'm down in the dirt because that's where Oliver wants me. He treats his livestock better than he treats me.

Adam: Your father is turning over in his grave right now, believe me. He was a good man. The best. It was a privilege to serve him. You're just like him. I'd rather be serving you than your brother.

Orlando: I wish so, too. But at least I can talk to you and confide in you. If I could only find some way to resist him—

Adam: Oh—I see him coming.

Orlando: He'll have something mean to say to me, just you watch.

(Adam moves somewhat apart as Oliver comes in.)

Oliver: What are you doing, brother—slacking off, as usual?

Orlando: If I had any useful work to do, then you could accuse me of slacking off.

Oliver: Well, then go find something useful to do. Just don't hang around here like a goddamn vagrant.

Orlando: Maybe I should go and shovel pig shit, since you don't want me to have an education.

Oliver: Don't talk to me like that. I'm your older brother.

Orlando: And I'm as much the son of my father as you are—and your equal.

Oliver: You smart-ass!

(Oliver raises his hand to smack Orlando, but Orlando grabs his wrist. They grapple, and Orlando is by far the stronger.)

Orlando: Who's stronger—you or me?

Oliver: You low-life!

Orlando: Low-life? Am I a low-life? Then what are you? And what was my father? My father was Sir Rowland de Boys!

Oliver: So was mine!

(They continue to struggle, and now Orlando has his hand on Oliver's throat.)

Oliver: You bastard—let me go!

Orlando: If you weren't my brother, I'd strangle you!

(Alarmed, Adam steps forward to intervene.)

Adam: Stop! Please! Don't fight like this! Please! Think of your poor dead father!

Oliver (To Orlando): Let me go!

Orlando: You were supposed to give me a good education! You sent Jaques off to university—but not me! You treat me like shit! Either you treat me better, or you give me my share of the estate so I can leave!

Oliver: Yeah, so you can piss it all away!—All right, if that's what you want. I'll give you—I'll give you enough so you can go away. Now let go of me!

(Orlando lets go. Oliver takes a moment to straighten himself.)

Oliver: Go in the house and wait for me. *(To Adam)* And you, too, you old fart.

Adam: Old fart? Is that what you call me? I wish your father were here now to hear you say that. Your father never once spoke a bad word to me—not ever.

(Orlando tugs Adam's sleeve gently, and the two of them leave.)

Oliver: That kid is really burning my ass. But I'll fix him. And he's not getting a penny out of me either.—Yo! Dennis!

(Dennis comes in.)

Dennis: Yes, my lord?

Oliver: Dennis, wasn't the Duke's wrestler looking for me?

Dennis: Yes, sir. Charles, the wrestler. He's here now.

Oliver: Go and get him.

Dennis: Yes, my lord.

(Dennis leaves.)

Oliver: A wrestling match. That's how I'll fix my brother.

(Charles comes in.)

Charles: Good morning, sir.

Oliver (Very friendly): Ah, Charles! So good to see you! Keeping fit, are you?

Charles: Oh, yes, sir!

Oliver: So what's the news in the court—that is, the new court, not the old court, ha, ha!

Charles: As you say, sir—the new court. The Duke banished his older brother. Some lords have gone away with him, of their own free will. They had to give up all their lands to Frederick. I'm sure he doesn't mind that at all.

Oliver: I should think not. And what about Rosalind? Did she go with her father into exile?

Charles: No, no. She's still here. She couldn't bear to leave her cousin Celia. They're inseparable.

Oliver: So where has old Duke Senior gone?

Charles: As I understand it, he and his party have settled themselves in Arden Forest. And they're having a good old time out there. Living just like Robin Hood. Not a care in the world. Living off the land. Why, they've practically got their own little colony, with lots of young gentlemen joining them who want to get away from the world and live a simple life.

Oliver: A simple life! I should say so. Well, I hope they're happy communing with the chipmunks and eating berries. Tell me, you're going to give a wrestling exhibition for Frederick tomorrow, aren't you?

Charles: Indeed, sir. And that's what I wanted to talk to you about. You see, I've been told—confidentially—that your brother Orlando intends to disguise himself and have a go at wrestling with me.

Oliver: Ah, really?

Charles: So I've heard, sir. And, you see, sir—well, I have my reputation to uphold. I always win. Now, I wouldn't want to hurt your brother.—After all, out of respect for you, sir.—But if he steps into the ring with me—well, I really have no choice.

Oliver: Charles, you're a good man. I'll always remember your loyalty.

Charles: Thank you, sir.

Oliver: And I'm glad you came to me. I knew that Orlando wanted to wrestle you. I tried to talk him out of it, of course—purely out of a sense of brotherly protectiveness. But he's far too stubborn for his

own good. He's gotten to be too cocky, too ambitious. And I have to say—in all confidence—that he's been making plans against me.

Charles: Oh, no, sir!

Oliver: Yes, I'm afraid it's true. So what I'm telling you is that you're at liberty to wrestle him as you would anyone else.—Frankly, I wouldn't be angry with you if you broke his neck. And you probably should, so he can't get even later. He's a bad loser. He'll kill you. He'll resort to some dirty trick if he has to. He's really a bad guy, Charles. And, believe me, it hurts me to say anything bad about my brother—but if you knew him the way I know him, you'd be shocked.

Charles: Then it's a good thing I came to see you, sir. Now I understand the situation. I'll give him a good thrashing, don't you worry. They'll have to carry him out.

Oliver: Yes. You do that.

Charles: God bless you, sir. Thank you, sir.

Oliver: And you, too, Charles.

(Charles leaves.)

Oliver: Excellent. Now I'll put a bee in Orlando's bonnet and make sure that he wrestles Charles. And then—good riddance.—I don't know why I hate him so much—but I do.—Maybe it's because everyone else likes him better than they like me. Even my own people.—Well, once he tries to wrestle Charles, I won't have any more problems with him.

(Oliver leaves.)

Act 1, Scene 2. *Outside the palace of Duke Frederick. Celia and Rosalind come in.*

Celia: I know you're sad about your father, Roz, but try to be happy. At least we're together.

Rosalind: I'll try for your sake.

Celia: Someday I'll inherit everything from my father. Then I can return everything he took from your father.

Rosalind: You're good, Celia.

(Touchstone comes in, dressed in a traditional court jester uniform.)

Touchstone: Mistress Celia, your father is asking for you.

Celia: Ah, my dear Touchstone—have they made you a messenger?

Touchstone: Oh, no. There was no time to make one for me, so they just sent me instead.

Celia (To Rosalind): You have to watch what you say to this guy.

Touchstone: One cannot watch words. One can only hear them.

Celia (To Rosalind): See what I mean?

Touchstone: You can't see a meaning. You can only understand it.

Celia (To Rosalind): I give up.

Rosalind: You are a clever fool, Touchstone.

Touchstone: "Clever fool" is an example of an oxymoron. But I'll take it as the compliment I'm sure you intended.

Rosalind: Of course.

Celia: I see Monsieur Le Beau coming.

(Le Beau comes in.)

Le Beau: Ladies, you're missing all the fun.

Celia: What's happening?

Le Beau: The wrestling, of course.

Rosalind: Who's wrestling?

Le Beau: Charles, your uncle Frederick's wrestler. He's taking on all comers. He's already beaten three guys.

Celia: Really? Who?

Le Beau: This wrestling promoter named Vince McMahon brought three of his stars to wrestle against Charles. The first one was Rey Mysterio.

Rosalind: Rey Mysterio?—Ooh, how mysterious! Who won?

Le Beau: Charles picked the guy up and slammed him to the ground like he was a doll. He creamed him.

Rosalind: Oh, my! Then what?

Le Beau: Then the second wrestler was this guy named Big Show.

Celia: Big Show! Was he big?

Le Beau: Very big. But he was slow. And Charles whipped around him like lightning and flipped him and got him in a leg lock, and the guy screamed and gave up. He went out crying.

Celia: Wonderful! And then what?

Le Beau: And then the third guy stepped in with Charles. His name was, uh—Alberto del Rio. A big, handsome dago greaseball.

Touchstone (Wagging his finger): Listen to your language, sir.

Le Beau: Yeah, yeah.—Anyway, Charles was toying with this guy for a while. He was pretending to be afraid. And Vince McMahon was hollering, “Get him, Alberto! Finish him off!” And so the dago grabs Charles from behind and tries to squeeze him with both arms. And then Charles gives him an elbow right in the gut, and the guy falls down, and he’s rolling around in pain. And Charles grabs him by the feet and spins him around and around and then he throws him into a pile of horse shit. It was hilarious! And poor Vince McMahon was tearing his hair out and screaming “I’m ruined! I’m ruined!”

Touchstone (Teasingly): That’s hardly the sort of thing nice ladies should watch.

Rosalind: I want to see!

Celia: Me, too!

(Le Beau looks over his shoulder.)

Le Beau: Oh, guess what. They’re moving the action over here. I guess there’s no room over there with all the bodies on the ground.

(A trumpet flourish. Then Duke Frederick, Charles, and Orlando come in, plus Lords and Attendants.)

Duke Frederick: There you are, ladies. You should see this fellow wrestle.

Celia: We’d love to!

Rosalind: Yes!

Duke Frederick: Well, I hope you’re not squeamish. This young man here *(Indicating Orlando)* thinks he can take on Charles. I tried to talk him out of it for his own good, but he insists. Maybe you can reason with him.

(The Duke moves apart and has a conversation with the Lords.)

Rosalind (To Orlando): You’re not really going to fight Charles, are you?

Orlando: Wrestle him, Mistress—

Rosalind: Rosalind.

Orlando: Mistress Rosalind. I’ll wrestle him, not fight him. It’s a sport.

Celia: But Charles is awfully strong. We wouldn’t want you to get hurt.

Rosalind: No. You’re such a handsome man. We wouldn’t think the worse of you if you changed your mind.

Orlando: Thank you. But don’t worry. I think I can beat him. Just think good thoughts for me. And even if I lose, I don’t care. My life hasn’t been very happy anyway. What does it matter if I get hurt—or die, even?

Rosalind: Oh, but you mustn't! *(She reaches out impulsively and holds Orlando's hand for a moment, and a look of mutual attraction passes between them.)* I'll think good thoughts for you. I'll concentrate so you'll win.

Celia: So will I.

(Frederick has a private word with Charles, who nods in agreement.)

Charles: All right, I'm ready to rumble—*(Looking at Orlando)* if you are.

Orlando: I'm ready.

Duke Frederick: This will be one round only.

Charles: He wouldn't last two rounds anyway.

(The party clears the centre stage for Charles and Orlando. Duke Frederick gives the signal, and they begin to wrestle. The crowd shouts encouragement. Orlando throws Charles. The crowd cheers.)

Duke Frederick: Stop! No more! *(He bends over Charles.)* Charles! Are you all right? *(To the Attendants)* Help him. Take care of him.

(The Attendants assist Charles out.)

Duke Frederick (To Orlando): Congratulations, young man. What's your name?

Orlando: Orlando, my lord. I'm the youngest son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

(Duke Frederick frowns and is silent for a moment.)

Duke Frederick: I knew your father—but not as a friend.—In any case, well done. You won the match.—I only wish—Never mind.

(Duke Frederick, looking serious, leaves with his party, including Le Beau.)

Celia: I'm afraid I'm rather embarrassed.

Orlando: It's all right. I'm proud to be the son of Rowland de Boys.

Rosalind: My father loved your father—and everyone else did, too.

Celia: You were very brave. You should be proud of beating Charles. I should think you'll make a fine catch for some lucky lady someday.

(Rosalind gives him a chain from her neck.)

Rosalind: Please take this. And think of me.

(Orlando is too tongue-tied to reply. Rosalind takes Celia by the arm to lead her out, but pauses momentarily to look back at Orlando, expecting him to speak. But he is still awkwardly tongue-tied, so Rosalind and Celia leave.)

Orlando (To himself): Dummy. Why didn't you say something? *(He regards the chain and sighs, looking longingly in the direction of Rosalind. Then Le Beau returns and takes Orlando by the arm in a confidential way.)*

Le Beau: Dude. Listen to me. For your own good—you ought to leave. The Duke is not a forgiving man. And right now you are definitely on his wrong side. Do you understand what I'm saying to you?

Orlando: Yes, I understand. Tell me, are those ladies related to the Duke?

Le Beau: Celia is Frederick's daughter. Rosalind is Duke Senior's daughter. He's the one who was banished. Rosalind stayed behind because she and Celia are very close. But she may not be around much longer. You see, everyone likes Rosalind, and they sympathize with her because of her father being banished. And Frederick doesn't like that, and he may take it out on her.—Anyway, you're a good guy. I'd like to get to know you better—but not here. Go somewhere where you'll be safe.

Orlando: I hear you, bro. Thanks.

(Le Beau leaves. Orlando looks at the chain again and looks in the direction of Rosalind again. Then he leaves in the opposite direction.)

Act 1. Scene 3. *A room in Duke Frederick's palace. Celia and Rosalind come in.*

Celia: You're awfully serious lately. What's the matter?

Rosalind: Oh—nothing.

Celia: I think I know what it is. You're thinking about Orlando. That's it, isn't it? You love him. *(Rosalind half-nods.)* Well, I won't say I approve—but I don't disapprove either.

Rosalind: For my sake, I want you to approve.

(Duke Frederick comes in, frowning.)

Duke Frederick: Rosalind, pack your things. I want you to leave.

Rosalind: You want me to leave?

Duke Frederick: I'll give you ten days. By that time, I want you twenty miles away from here—otherwise—I'll consider you to be an enemy—and deal with you accordingly.

Rosalind: But what have I done?

Duke Frederick: You're my brother's daughter. I don't want you around any more.

Celia: But father—

Duke Frederick (To Celia): She's a bad influence on you. I let her stay out of kindness, but now—it's a problem. I'm not comfortable having her around. She has to go.

Celia: No, father! I couldn't bear it!

Duke Frederick: You'll get over it. *(To Rosalind)* You're out of here in ten days.

(Duke Frederick leaves.)

Celia: Oh, Rosalind!

Rosalind: Well—I guess there’s nothing else for me to do but start packing.

Celia: I’ll go with you.

Rosalind: Why? You don’t have to.

Celia: If you go, I go. To hell with my father.

Rosalind: Oh, Celia.—Where would we go?

Celia: We’ll go to Arden Forest. We’ll find your father.

Rosalind: The two of us? All the way to Arden Forest? We’d never get there. We’d get raped.

Celia: No, no. Here’s what we’ll do. We’ll disguise ourselves as peasants. We’ll look very unattractive—and poor. No one will pay any attention to us.

Rosalind: We could do that, I suppose.—Even better, I could disguise myself as a man. I’m tall. I could be a man. I could even carry a sword.

Celia: Oh, that’s a nice touch. And what will you call yourself?

Rosalind: I’ll call myself—Ganymede.

Celia: Ganymede. I like that. And I’ll call myself—Aliena.

Rosalind: Aliena—as in “alienated”?

Celia: Exactly.

Rosalind: Listen. What about your father’s fool?

Celia: Touchstone?

Rosalind: Yes. If he came with us, he could be a big help. Do you think you could get him to come?

Celia: Leave it to me. He’d do anything for me.—Look, you pack some things—whatever we can carry ourselves. And don’t forget the money and jewels. We’ll figure out the best way to slip past the guards so we’ll be long gone before my father realizes it.

Rosalind: Yes!

(They embrace and then leave.)

Act 2, Scene 1. *In Arden Forest. Duke Senior, Lord Amiens, and other Lords come in, dressed like “foresters” (i.e., in a rustic style suitable for the woods).*

Duke Senior: This is the life, isn’t it? Out here with Mother Nature. Away from the court and all that political bullshit. Out here a man can really feel alive. Even with the cold and the wind and the rain. It’s all good.

Amiens: You're absolutely right, my lord. And there's no place else we'd rather be than out here with you.

Others: Yes! Yes!

Duke Senior: Of course, I hate to kill animals—but we gotta eat, right?

First Lord: Jaques is into animal rights now. He says killing animals is a form of oppression. And few of us followed him today, and he was crying over a wounded deer.

Duke Senior: Really? Did he say anything?

First Lord: Well, you know how he is. He sees everything in the worst way. He called the deer a poor, innocent creature, slaughtered by evil men—although, obviously, whoever shot it wasn't able to chase it down and finish it off. And, of course, the live deer going by were cruel for not stopping for the injured one. Like, what are they supposed to do, pull out the arrow? And then he was moaning about how sick and evil society is, and how we're all degenerating into barbarism.

Second Lord: We had to leave before we burst out laughing.

Amiens: Yeah.—Poor Jaques. He lives under a dark cloud.

Duke Senior: I should go talk to him. He's rather amusing to listen to when he gets into one of his moods.

Second Lord: He'll probably want to start a chapter of PETA right here in Arden Forest.

Duke Senior: PETA? Oh, God! Those assholes.

(They all leave.)

Act 2, Scene 2. *In Duke Frederick's palace. Frederick comes in with Lords and Attendants.*

Duke Frederick (Angrily): How could they just leave and no one saw saw them? Somebody must have known something.

First Lord: Nobody saw anything. The maids found their beds empty. And Touchstone is also missing.

Second Lord: Celia's lady overheard her and Rosalind talking about Orlando. It could be they've run off to meet up with him somewhere.

Duke Frederick: Send out a search party and look for them. IF you can't find Orlando, go get his brother Oliver and bring him here. I'll make him go and find Orlando.

Lords: Yes, my lord.

(The Lords and Attendants leave.)

Act 2, Scene 3. *Outside Oliver's house. Orlando is approaching the door when Adam rushes out to intercept him.*

Adam (In a hushed tone): No, Orlando! Don't come in!

Orlando: What's the matter?

Adam: It's not safe for you here any more.—Oh, what a disgrace.—When I think of your father—You're such a good boy, Orlando. So good. So much like your father.—What a terrible world it is when such a good boy should be in such danger—

Orlando: Danger? What danger?

Adam: Your brother. He intends to kill you. You must run away.

Orlando: Run away where?

Adam: It doesn't matter, as long as it's far from here.

Orlando: Adam, I have no money. What am I supposed to do? Beg? Steal? Oh, no. I'll face my brother.

Adam: No, no, no, you mustn't. *(He takes out a bag of money.)* Take this. It's five hundred crowns. It's my life savings.

Orlando: Oh, Adam, I can't—

Adam: Yes, yes, yes. I want you to have it. You're a good boy, Orlando. So much like your father. I would gladly serve you, if I— *(Looks over his shoulder toward the house. Then, decisively)* Take me with you. I'll serve you. I may be old, but I'm still strong.

Orlando: But who knows what will happen to me? Who knows where I might end up? You'd be risking your own life on my fate.

Adam: It doesn't matter. Whatever your fate is, I'll gladly share it. Anything's better than serving your brother.

Orlando: All right, then. You'll come with me.

Adam: Good!

(They leave.)

Act 2, Scene 4. *In Arden Forest. Rosalind comes in, dressed as the man Ganymede, with Celia, dressed as the shepherdess Aliena, and Touchstone, still dressed like a jester. They are exhausted. They remain to one side of the stage, to leave plenty of space for the next two players.*

Celia: We have to stop. I'm tired.

Touchstone: My feet are killing me.

Rosalind: I'd complain, too, but I'm supposed to be the man in charge.

Celia: Where are we?

Rosalind: This is Arden Forest.

Touchstone: I don't suppose there's such a thing as an inn around here.

Rosalind: I don't think so.—Wait. I see someone coming. Maybe we can find out something from them.

(Corin and Silvius come in from the other side, carrying on a conversation and not noticing the party opposite. Corin is an old man, and Silvius is young.)

Corin: You're going about it all wrong, Silvius. That's not the way to make her love you.

Silvius: Corin, you don't understand what I'm going through.

Corin: Oh, as if I was never young and in love.

Silvius: You never made a fool of yourself the way I have.

Corin: Ha! I made a fool of myself so many times I've forgotten most of them.

Silvius: If you can't remember, then you can't understand how I feel. All I can think about—is Phoebe—*(He holds his head in his hands.)* Phoebe—Phoebe—

Corin (Mocking him slightly): Phoebe—Phoebe—You poor sap. Take my advice. Go home. Take a pill. Whatever. And sleep it off.

(Silvius leaves, moaning “Phoebe—Phoebe—“.)

Touchstone (To Rosalind): Take a pill and sleep it off. He's right. Love is just an illness of the mind. Temporary insanity.

Rosalind: Could be. But I still feel sorry for that boy.

Celia: I'm starving. Ask him if he has any food. We'll pay him for it.

Touchstone (To Corin): Yo! Shepherd!

Corin: Who's calling me?

Touchstone: Your superiors.

Corin: Well, I hope so for your sake. You wouldn't want to be my inferiors.

Rosalind (To Corin): He was joking. Please, is there any place where we can get food and a place to sleep? We're very tired and hungry.

Corin: Oh, I'm afraid I can't help you there. I'm just a poor shepherd. I could take you back to my master's cottage, but there's no food there. He's away, and the place is up for sale. That young fellow I was just talking to was supposed to buy it, but I don't think he's in any state of mind to do any business.

(Rosalind thinks for a moment.)

Rosalind: We'll buy it.

Corin: You'll—buy it?

Rosalind: Yes. We have money. You could buy it for us.

Celia: Yes. And you can stay and work for us. Whatever your old master was paying you, we'll give you a raise.

(Corin is wide-eyed and open-mouthed for a moment.)

Corin: You got a deal. Let's go.

(They all leave.)

Act 2, Scene 5. *This scene is deleted.*

Act 2, Scene 6. *This scene is deleted.*

Act 2, Scene 7. *In the forest. Duke Senior, Amiens, and other Lords are sitting at a table eating. They are dressed like foresters.*

Duke Senior: Where's Jaques?

First Lord: He should be around. He's actually in a better mood today. Amiens was singing for him, and he really liked it.

Duke Senior: Is that so? *(To Amiens)* You'll have to give us a song later, Amiens.

Amiens: Gladly.

First Lord: Here's Jaques.

(Jaques comes in, rather giddy.)

Duke Senior: There you are, Jaques. You have a strange look on your face. What's going on?

Jaques: I met a fool in the forest.

Duke Senior: A fool? What sort of fool?

Jaques: You know—court jester-type. Funny clothes. Weird cap. But he was no fool—that is, he wasn't an idiot. He actually said something that made me think.

Duke Senior: What, specifically?

Jaques: He said—God looks out for the fool, but the wise man must look out for himself.

Duke Senior: Huh!

Jaques: That what I want to be—a fool. Uniform and all.

Duke Senior (Laughing): I'll buy you one.

Jaques: That would make me very happy. And, of course, if I'm a fool, I'm allowed to make jokes at other people's expense, and they have to take it. That's what I want—the freedom to say anything to anyone. That's what this world needs—a critic who really tells it like it is.

Duke Senior: Yeah, right, you're going to be a critic. Come off it, Jaques. You have the same vices as everyone else.

Jaques: But I can still criticize in a general way. If I say something and people are offended, it just proves I've hit the mark, and they must have a guilty conscience. An innocent person would just let it slide off him.

(Orlando comes in with his sword drawn.)

Orlando: Sorry, you guys, but I'm going to have to take your food.

Jaques: But I haven't eaten yet.

Duke Senior: Who are you to come in here like this? Don't you have any manners?

Orlando: To hell with manners. I need food.

Duke Senior: Look here, sir. If you're hungry, you only have to ask for food in a polite way. We'll feed you. You don't have to act like an outlaw.

(Orlando is embarrassed and puts away his sword.)

Orlando: I'm sorry. I thought you were outlaws yourselves, from the way you're dressed. I didn't expect to meet—gentlemen—out here.—I've been through a terrible ordeal.

Duke Senior: We've had our ordeals, too. Sit down and eat.

Orlando: I've got an old man with me. He's starving. He has to eat first.

Duke Senior: That's fine. Go and get him.

Orlando: Thank you. I'll be right back.

(Orlando leaves.)

Duke Senior: You see? Even out here you can find human misery. The world is full of it.

(Jaques stands up and adopts a pose suitable for recitation.)

Jaques: All the world's a stage—

(A long pause while everyone waits for him to continue. But he just stands there as if he's lost his train of thought.)

Duke Senior: Yes? Go on.

Jaques: Yes.—Ahem—All the world's a stage—and we are all actors—

(Another awkward pause.)

Duke Senior: Yes? And?

(Jaques looks at the theatre audience. The suggestion here is that he has forgotten his lines.)

Jaques: Um—well—it's like—you know—we go through life—and—we play, like, different roles—and then—we're dead.

(He sits down quickly and tries to hide himself out of embarrassment. Give the audience a chance to get a good laugh out of this. Then Orlando returns with Adam, who can hardly walk.)

Duke Senior: Sit him down right there. *(To Adam)* Sit down, sir. Eat all you like.

Adam (Feebly): Thank you. *(He sits down.)*

Duke Senior (To Orlando): And you sit next to me. I want to know all about what happened to you.

Orlando: Thank you. *(Orlando sits down.)*

Duke Senior: Amiens, you promised to sing for us.

Amiens: Yes!

(Amiens produces a guitar and steps to the centre stage. Duke Senior and Orlando will have their private conversation while Amiens sings and plays directly to audience. He sings a tuneless song in a fake foreign language. The audience should find this funny. When he's finished, he simply sits down at the table again.)

Duke Senior (To Orlando): I knew your father well. I'm glad you found me. You and your friend will stay with us. We have a cave for shelter. You'll come back with us. I want to hear the rest of your story.

(They all leave.)

Act 3, Scene 1. *In Duke Frederick's palace. Frederick comes in with Oliver and Lords.*

Duke Frederick (Angrily): What do you mean, you don't know where your brother is? If I weren't such a nice guy, I'd forget about him and punish you instead.

Oliver: But, your Grace—

Duke Frederick: You find him and bring him back, dead or alive, or you're banished. And in the meantime, I'm seizing all your property until I'm satisfied that you had nothing to do with my daughter running away. For all I know, you and your brother were both in on it.

Oliver: But, your Grace, I'd never help my brother in any scheme. I hate his guts.

Duke Frederick: You hate your own brother? Now I trust you even less. *(To the Lords)* Get this son of a bitch out of here and have my officers take possession of his property.

Lords: Yes, my lord.

(They all leave except Frederick.)

Act 3, Scene 2. *In the forest. Orlando comes in with papers and fixes one to a tree.*

Orlando: Rosalind–Rosalind–Rosalind–I’ll stick love poems for you all over the forest until I find you–my darling Rosalind.

(He leaves. Then Corin and Touchstone come in.)

Corin: So how do you like it out here, Touchstone? Do you think a shepherd’s life would suit you?

Touchstone: Only if I were a shepherd. And I do like a solitary life, but I have to have other people around to enjoy it.

Corin: Ha!

Touchstone: And being out here in the middle of nowhere is perfect–except that the forest needs some development to make it a bit more urban.

Corin: Ha!

Touchstone: A simple life is fine–as long as I have my luxuries, too. That’s my philosophy. Do you have any philosophy?

Corin: Sure. Eat when you’re hungry, sleep when you’re tired, and dress warmly in the winter. And whatever your faults are, never admit to them.

Touchstone: There you go. You’re a philosopher. You must have spent some time at court with the upper class.

Corin: Me? Oh, hell, no.

Touchstone: No? Then there’s no hope for you.

Corin: Don’t say that.

Touchstone: It’s true. If you’ve never lived among the nobles, you never learned good manners. And if you have bad manners, you’re a sinner. And that leads to damnation.

Corin: Don’t be silly. Those people would be just as out of place here as I’d be where they are. Why, you even told me yourself that they’re constantly kissing each other’s hands.

Touchstone: Of course. That’s how they greet each other.

Corin: Try kissing the hand of a shepherd–if you like the smell of sheep.

Touchstone: What do you think rich people’s perfume is made from? Extracts from the glands of a civet cat.

Corin: Ewww! That’s disgusting!

Touchstone: Well, you’re one to talk about disgusting. What do shepherds do with their sheep? You bring the rams and the ewes together at mating time and–you know–let them do it–in plain sight. Is that polite?

Corin: Well, we could put up a curtain, but I don't think it would make any difference to them.

Touchstone: That's the problem with your natural style of life. It's entirely too—natural. Civilization exists to control nature.

Corin: You're over my head, sir, but I don't mind.—Ah, here comes Master Ganymede.

(Rosalind comes in slowly, reading one of Orlando's poems aloud.)

Rosalind (Reading):

“Rosalind, Rosalind, that is her name,
Her beauty puts all others to shame,
The wind blows through her hair,
As if it were not there,
And the sun and moon doth shine,
Because she is so fine,
And even when the bedbugs bite,
I dream of her when I turn out the light.”

Touchstone: Is that post-modern—or post-mortem?

Rosalind: Oh, shush, you cynic.

Touchstone: Critic? Yes, I am a critic. Where did you find that?

Rosalind: On a tree.

Touchstone: On a tree? Bad poetry grows on trees? *(To Corin)* You never told me about that.

(Celia comes in with a similar paper.)

Celia: Listen to this. *(She reads)*

“Heaven sent a maiden fair,
To steal my heart away,
And so I go to find her,
Every night and every day,
And when I find that maiden,
What tears of joy I'll cry,
For Rosalind, sweet Rosalind,
I'll love you till I die.”

Rosalind: It's not brilliant, but I believe he's sincere.

Touchstone (Reciting mockingly):

All the squirrels come out to see

When I piss against a tree—

Rosalind: Oh, stop.

Touchstone (Continuing):

Neither do they mind a bit

If I squat to take a—

Celia: Stop! That's enough!

Corin (To Touchstone): Say, you're really good at that.

Celia: Oh, go away—both of you.

(Corin and Touchstone leave.)

Rosalind: Who's leaving these poems on trees?

Celia (With a sly look): Someone who knows you—obviously.

Rosalind: But who?

Celia: You should be able to figure that out.

Rosalind: No. I can't. Tell me.

Celia: Don't you remember? That very handsome and very strong young man you gave your necklace to?

Rosalind: You mean—Orlando?

Celia: The very same.

Rosalind: How do you know?

Celia: I saw him. He was sleeping beside a tree, and he had a bunch of poems in his hand.

Rosalind: Oh, my God! He's here in Arden Forest. And here I am dressed like a man.—Oh, hell.

Celia: Uh, oh. I see him coming. We'd better hide.

(Rosalind and Celia conceal themselves. Then Orlando comes in with Jaques.)

Jaques: Please don't ruin any more trees by sticking bad poems on them.

Orlando: I'm not hurting the trees.

Jaques: Ah, but can we really know what a tree feels? If you were a tree, you couldn't cry out. All your physical and emotional pain would be locked inside you.

Orlando (Perplexed): I never thought of that.

Jaques: What's the girl's name—Rosalind?

Orlando: Yes.

Jaques: I don't like it.

Orlando: Is there anything you do like?

Jaques: What's to like when everything in the world is so imperfect?

Orlando: Well, I should think that—

Jaques: Yes, you should think. But how can you when you're in love? People in love are out of their minds. It's like a sickness.

Orlando: Well, I'd rather have that sickness than the one you've got.

Jaques: I can see I'm wasting my time. Thank you for the conversation. It was quite boring.

Orlando: You're very welcome. And take your cloud of gloom with you.

(Jaques leaves. Celia and Rosalind have been conferring, and now Rosalind steps out of concealment.)

Rosalind: Yo! Woodsman!

Orlando: I'm not a woodsman, sir, but never mind.

Rosalind: Do you know what time it is?

Orlando: What time it is? Good God, man. There are no clocks in the middle of a forest.

Rosalind: Then no one can keep an appointment.

Orlando: Who has appointments in a forest?

Rosalind: No one. That's why lovers can never meet in a forest.

(Orlando regards his poems and is sad for a moment.)

Orlando: You're right. They can't—except by pure luck.—You speak quite well for a rustic. Do you live around here?

Rosalind: Yes. I live with my sister. *(She nods to Celia, who steps out of concealment.)* We had an uncle who lived among gentlemen. He taught us how to speak the way they do at court. You speak that way yourself.

Orlando: Yes, I—I used to live—*(Pauses painfully)* But never mind.

Rosalind: Tell me, sir. Who is that lovesick fool who's been leaving poems stuck on trees?

Orlando: Oh—you found some, did you?

Rosalind: Yes. Some poor fool is in love with a lady named Rosalind. He's obviously in a bad way. I'd like to have a talk with him. He needs help.

Orlando: Oh—well—to tell you the truth—it's me.

Rosalind: I don't believe it. You look entirely too well. Whoever wrote those poems would be red-eyed from lack of sleep, and his cheeks would be shrunken in from not eating. And his clothes would be a mess because he'd forget all about his appearance. You don't look like that.

Orlando: But I am that person—that poor fool, as you call him.

Rosalind: Tell me. Do you really mean all the things you wrote in those poems?

Orlando: Yes, I do. Maybe I don't express myself very well. I would never claim to be a poet. But I do love that lady—even more than I can say in words.

Rosalind: Tsk! It's a form of insanity, sir. The only reason people in love aren't locked up like other lunatics is that there are far too many of them. It's simply too common an illness. But I could cure you.

Orlando: Cure me? I don't want to be cured.

Rosalind: Of course, you don't. I understand. But if you do what I suggest, you'll feel a lot better.—I won't do you any harm. I promise.

Orlando: And what is it that you suggest I do?

Rosalind: We'll pretend that I'm that lady Rosalind. I'll show you where I live, and you'll come by every day to—you know—court me. And you must remember to call me Rosalind.

Orlando (To Celia): He's not gay, is he?

Celia: No, no. Don't worry.

Rosalind (To Orlando): Now you just come along with us, and on the way you can show us where you're living.

Orlando: All right. I'll go along with you—just to prove that you can't cure me.—Huh! What an idea!

Rosalind: Just trust me. And remember to call me Rosalind.—Come on, Aliena.

(They all leave.)

Act 3, Scene 3. *In the forest. Touchstone comes in with Audrey, a goatherd. Jaques is behind them, spying.*

Touchstone: Aw, come on, Audrey—sweetie pie. What do you say? Am I the man for you? I'll help you herd your goats. Come on. *(He strikes a pose in front of her.)* Hey, have I got it—or not?

Audrey (Puzzled, looking him over): Got what?

Touchstone: You know—style.

Audrey: I don't know anything about style. I'm just a goatherd.

Touchstone: Just a goatherd—yes.—That's the life for me. Just like the poet Ovid—living with the Goths.—Goths.—Get it?

Audrey: I never heard of him.

(Jaques rolls his eyes and shakes his head for the benefit of the audience.)

Touchstone: That was a joke.—Goths?—Goats?

Audrey: I don't get it. I'm just a simple girl. I'm sorry.

Touchstone: Oh, but I like the simple ones the best—heh, heh. Plain and simple.

Audrey: I'm certainly plain, all right. I'd never pretend to be beautiful.

Touchstone: That's fine with me. The plain ones are usually better—where it counts. *(He gives her a suggestive leer. Jaques is reacting.)*

Audrey: Where it counts?

Touchstone: You know—heh, heh—where it really counts—at night—with the lights out—heh heh.

(Audrey looks totally stupid and perplexed. Then a glimmer of understanding comes to her.)

Audrey: I hope you don't mean—that I'm—that kind of girl.

Touchstone: Oh, no, no, no, no, no.—No.—Not at all. *(Pauses)* Actually—yes.

Audrey: Sir! I'm a chaste girl..

Touchstone: Chaste—ha, ha. Well, you haven't been chased until I've chased you—ha, ha.

Audrey: Until you've what?

Touchstone: You may be chaste now, but I'll turn you into a hottie—heh, heh.

Audrey: Hottie?

(Touchstone goes down on one knee and takes her hand and kisses it.)

Touchstone: I love the smell of sheep! Marry me, you wonderful girl! Marry me! Say yes, for God's sake. You can understand that, at least, can't you?

Audrey: Ye-e-e-s-s.—I think I understand.—Well—Mr. Touchstone—if you love me—and my sheep—then, yes, I'll marry you.

Touchstone (Rising): Good. I knew you'd give in, so I already sent for the vicar—Sir Oliver Martext.

(Jaques smacks his head in disbelief.)

Audrey: Oh! I'm so happy! Me—a married woman!

Touchstone: We'll get married right here in the forest—with all the animals—and their horns.

Audrey: Horns? Like the deer?

Touchstone: Yes! The deer!—My dear—ha, ha!—And why does a deer have horns?

Audrey: I don't know.

Touchstone: Because he's been cuckolded! *(He makes a gesture of horns on his head.)* But does the deer care? No. And neither do I. Because if I were a bachelor, I couldn't grow horns at all, now, could I?

Audrey (Confused): Oh, dear—

Touchstone: Deer! Yes! Brilliant! Ha! Ha!—Where's that vicar?

(Sir Oliver Martext comes in.)

Touchstone: Ah, finally! Do you want to, uh, do us right here? Or should we go to the chapel?

Sir Oliver: Someone has to give the bride away.

Touchstone: Give her away? Why? Does somebody own her now?

Sir Oliver: No, no, no. You don't understand. There must be a man present to give the bride away. It's a formality. Otherwise the marriage isn't legal.

(Jaques jumps out and steps forward.)

Jaques: I'll give her away. I swear I never had her, but I'll give her away anyway.

Touchstone: Oh, it's you—Mister Whatever-your-name-is. Nice to see you again.—No, keep your hat on. He's just a country vicar.

Jaques: So you've decided to put on the ball and chain, eh?

Audrey (To Touchstone): What does that mean?

Touchstone: It's just a joke. Never mind. *(To Jaques)* Well, you know how it is.

Jaques (Pretending not to understand): Mmm?

Touchstone: We're men after all. *(Casting a sideways glance at Audrey)* And we have our needs.

Jaques: Ah. Yes. Quite so. But really, you want a proper marriage in a church—with a priest who knows how to do it properly. I wouldn't trust this fellow to join two pieces of wood.

Touchstone (Aside to the audience): Actually, that was the whole idea. If he didn't do it right, I'd have an excuse to run away later if I wasn't happy.

Jaques: Now you listen to good old Jaques and come along with me. We'll get you fixed up with a real priest.

Touchstone: All right, then.—Come along, Audrey. If we're not married properly, we'll both burn in hell for what I intend to do with you.—Sorry, Sir Oliver. Next time with you. I promise.

(They all leave except Sir Oliver, who stands there, looking very offended.)

Act 3, Scene 4. *Elsewhere in the forest. Rosalind and Celia come in. (Throughout this scene, Celia is teasing Rosalind.)*

Rosalind: Orlando never showed up. He said he would.

Celia: Perhaps he forgot. Or perhaps he realized he wasn't in love after all, so he didn't need to be cured.

Rosalind: But he swore that he was in love.

Celia: Men are always swearing to this and that, but you mustn't take them literally. They may mean it at the moment they say it, but if you try to hold them to it later, they'll say, "Oh, that was yesterday. I feel differently today."—By the way, he bumped into your father, and he's staying with him.

Rosalind: I bumped into him, too. He didn't recognize me in this disguise. I told him I was as noble as he was, and he laughed because he thought I was Joking.—But do you really think Orlando doesn't love me? What about all those poems?

Celia: Poems!—Words on paper. That's all. They don't prove anything.

(Corin comes in.)

Corin: Mistress Aliena. Master Ganymede. You'll want to come and see something. Remember that young shepherd Silvius you saw me with?

Celia: Yes. What was that girl's name—the one he was in love with?

Corin: Phoebe. He's with her now—the poor guy. It's awful. Come and see.

Rosalind: Yes. Take us, Corin. I may have something to say to them.

(They leave.)

Act 3, Scene 5. *Silvius and Phoebe come in.*

Silvius: Please, Phoebe, give me a chance, for Christ's sake. Why are you being so mean? The way you look at me, it's like you're sticking a knife into me.

(Rosalind, Celia, and Corin come in at the back, unnoticed.)

Phoebe: Sticking a knife into you! Show me the wound, you poor boy.

Silvius: It's not a wound you can see. Someday you may get what you're giving me now. Then you'll be sorry.

Phoebe: Fine. When that happens, then you can gloat. Until then, just stay away from me. I'm not interested in your lovesick whining.

(Rosalind steps forward, speaking as Ganymede.)

Rosalind: Just a minute. Who are you to puke such contempt all over this guy? Do you think you're Aphrodite? You're nobody special. *(Phoebe reacts with a proud look.)* Hey, spare me the pose. *(To Silvius)* I don't know why you waste your time with this—this nasty woman. She's not worth crying over. You could do a lot better.

Phoebe: Oh, really!

Rosalind: You're very stupid to turn down a perfectly nice young man. You should be glad to have him.

(There is a pause while Phoebe looks at Rosalind. Her expression is one of fascination and attraction.)

Phoebe: No one's ever spoken to me like that before. You're very different.

Rosalind (To Silvius): You see? Some women need to get their butts kicked in order to respect a man.

Phoebe: You can say what you want to me. I'll listen. I don't mind.

Rosalind: Don't get any ideas about me. You're not my type.

Phoebe: Who are you? Where do you live?

Rosalind: My name is Ganymede. I live in the house by the olive grove. Me and my sister Aliena *(Indicating her)*. Now, as for this poor guy, he may be the only man in the world who thinks you're beautiful. If you had any sense, you'd give him a chance. *(To Celia and Corin)* Come on. I'm through with her. Let's go.

(Rosalind, Celia, and Corin leave. Phoebe's fascinated gaze follows Rosalind out.)

Phoebe: What a fascinating man.

Silvius: Phoebe, please, I'm begging you.

Phoebe: What?

Silvius: I love you.

Phoebe: Stop it, Silvius. I can be your friend, but that's all.

Silvius: But I want more than friendship.

Phoebe: Well, that's all I can give you.—But you can stick around.

Silvius: I will. All I ask is a smile now and then—just to show me you care for me a little bit.

Phoebe: Yes, yes.—Do you know that fellow by any chance?

Silvius: Just slightly. He bought the property I was supposed to buy. I didn't care about it any more.—Why do you want to know? Do you like him?

Phoebe: Oh, no, no, no—not at all. Although he is nice-looking. I suppose some women would find him attractive. Not me, of course.—He really shouldn’t have spoken to me the way he did, now that I think about it. It was very rude. I should have told him off. And that’s what I’m going to do right now. I’m going to write him a letter and give him a piece of my mind. Will you deliver it for me?

Silvius: Yes, of course. I’ll do anything for you.

Phoebe: Yes, I thought so. I’ll write that letter right now. Come on.

(They leave, with Phoebe leading Silvius.)

Act 4, Scene 1. *In Arden Forest. Rosalind and Celia come in, still in the guise of Ganymede and Aliena. They meet Orlando coming in. (Jaques is deleted from this scene.)*

Orlando: There you are. Good morning, um, my dear Rosalind.

Rosalind: You’re an hour late, Orlando. If I were Rosalind, I’d be annoyed.

Orlando: Oh, sorry. It won’t happen again.

Rosalind: All right. Never mind. Now—what would you say next to Rosalind?

Orlando: I’d kiss her first.

Rosalind: Not so fast. You have to speak to her first and then try to kiss her when she isn’t expecting it.

Orlando: And what if she won’t accept a kiss?

Rosalind: Then she’s toying with you, get it? So then you have to keep talking.

Orlando: Okay. I think I’m learning something. All right, so I talk some more and then I tell her again that I love her. What then?

Rosalind: If I’m Rosalind, I say, no, I don’t want you.

Orlando: Then I would say that I’ll die without your love.

Rosalind: No, no, no. Nobody dies from love. That only happens in romantic stories, and they’re all nonsense. So don’t try that tack with me. You’ll get nowhere.

Orlando: Well, that’s not very encouraging. I hope Rosalind doesn’t really feel that way.

Rosalind: All right, then. I’ll be friendly Rosalind. I’ll listen to whatever you say. So now what will you say?

Orlando: I’ll say—love me, Rosalind.

Rosalind: Love you? Fine. Done. Weekends included.

Orlando: So you’ll have me, then, right?

Rosalind: Sure, and twenty more just like you.

Orlando: What do you mean?

Rosalind: Well, you can't have too much of a good thing, now, can you?

Orlando: I'm not sure I like that.

Rosalind: But you're in love. You'll go along with anything at this point. *(To Celia)* Aliena, you'll be the priest. You marry us.

Celia: I don't know what to say.

Rosalind: Sure you do. You've been to weddings.

Celia: Okay.—Do you, Orlando, take this woman Rosalind to be your lawfully wedded wife.?

Orlando: Yes.

Rosalind: And I'll take you to be my husband. Good. That's done. Now—how long do you expect to keep me?

Orlando: Forever, of course.

Rosalind: Be careful what you wish for. You might get it. And now that we're married, you're going to see how I change. Now you're going to see my bad side. I'm going to be jealous. I'm going to be a nag. I'm going to complain. I'm going to be demanding. And I'm never going to be—in the mood—when you are. What do you think of that?

Orlando: My God, is that how it's going to be?

Rosalind: Probably.

Orlando: But she's a smart lady.

Rosalind: The smart ones are the worst. You can't stifle them. They have an answer for everything. And they'll do whatever they want.

Orlando (Groaning): Oh-h-h-h—

Rosalind: And if she cheats on you—which is likely—she'll make it look like it's your fault.

Orlando (Very downcast): Well—I won't say you've cured me—but this is all rather discouraging. *(Sighs)* Anyway, I have to go eat lunch with the Duke. I promised.

Rosalind (Sarcastically): Oh, no. You can't leave me for anything now that we're married.

Orlando: I'll be back at two o'clock.

Rosalind: Fine. Go, then. I should have expected this. Some husband you are. My friends warned me not to marry you.—Death, take me now!—Two o'clock, you said?

Orlando: Yes, yes, I promise.

Rosalind: A promise is a promise. I'll hold you to it. If you're even one minute late—and I'll know even without a clock—then I'll know you're a liar, like every other man.

Orlando: I swear to you I'll be back.

Rosalind: Go on, then. Have your nice lunch with the Duke.

Orlando: Goodbye.

(Orlando leaves.)

Celia: Wow. What an act. If he still loves you after all that, then you know it's for real.

Roaslind (Sighing): I hope so. I have to know.—Ah, cousin, if you only knew how much I love him.

Celia: I hope he comes back.

Rosalind: I just hope Cupid's on my side.—I'm tired. I need to lie down.

Celia: Yes. Let's take a nap.

(They leave.)

Act 4, Scene 2. *This scene is deleted.*

Act 4, Scene 3. *In the forest. Rosalind and Celia come in.*

Rosalind: It's past two o'clock, and he's not back.

Celia: Don't worry. I'm sure there's a reasonable explanation.—Oh. Someone's coming.

(Silvius comes in.)

Silvius (To Rosalind): Excuse me, sir, but my dear Phoebe sends you this letter. *(Hands her the letter.)* It may not be very nice, but don't blame me for it.

Rosalind (Reading the letter to herself): Huh—It's one insult after another—I'm arrogant—mean—nasty—don't know how to behave with a lady—Ha! A lady? Did she really write this, or did you?

Silvius: No, not me. Phoebe wrote it.

Rosalind: And you don't know what's in the letter?

Silvius: No. Only that she was angry when she wrote it.

Rosalind: Aliena, listen to this.—She says I made her hot when I was criticizing her. She says I can have her. *(Reading the letter directly to Silvius)* “My messenger doesn't know that I love you. Please send him back with your reply, which I hope will be positive.”

(Silvius looks crushed.)

Celia: Oh, Silvius, I'm sorry for you.

Rosalind (To Silvius): I don't know why you would love such a woman. She's so bad to you. Well, you go back to her, and you tell her this. She should be loving you, not me. I won't have her unless you want to give her up. Otherwise, I want her to marry you. *(She pokes Silvius in the chest to*

exphasize what she's saying.) And you, mister—you had better get some backbone, because the more you let her walk all over you, the less she'll respect you. Now go.

(Silvius leaves. Then Oliver de Boys comes in, walking slowly. His manner is restrained and serious.)

Oliver: Good morning. Do you know if there's a shepherd's cottage surrounded by olive trees in this area?

Celia: Yes. That's our place.

Oliver: Then you're the ones I'm looking for. I have a message from Orlando.

Rosalind (Excitedly): Yes?

Oliver: He was not able to return to keep his appointment. He sends this to the gentleman he calls Rosalind.

(He hands Rosalind a bloody handkerchief.)

Rosalind: It's blood! What's happened?

Oliver: He'll be all right. He's resting.

Rosalind: But what happened?

Oliver (With controlled emotion): He—that is—I was looking for him. And I fell asleep. And then I was awakened by this awful noise. And I saw him fighting with a lion—

Rosalind: Oh!

Oliver: The lion wounded him, but he killed it with his sword.—If he hadn't been there, that lion would have killed me.

Rosalind: Thank God he was there!

Celia: A lion! My God!

Oliver (Somberly): He could have left me to die. It would have served me right.

Rosalind: Why do you say that?

Oliver: I'm—his brother—Oliver.

Celia: Oliver!—He told us about you.

Oliver: Well, I can imagine what he said.—I wasn't very nice to him.—In fact—I was really very bad.—And I'm sorry now. I was so wrong—so wrong.—I'll never be bad to him again. I'll make it up to him.

Rosalind (Regarding the bloody handkerchief): Are you sure he's all right?

Oliver: Yes. I helped him get back to the Duke. He's in good hands. He's a strong guy, you know. He'll get better very fast.—We talked everything over. We're on good terms again.—He knew you'd be

worried, so he sent me to look for you. He told me to find the man he calls Rosalind. I guess that's some sort of private joke, isn't it?

(Rosalind faints into Celia's arms.)

Celia: Oh! Ganymede! Brother!

(Oliver goes to help.)

Oliver: Easy does it.—I guess the sight of blood is too much for some people.

Celia: It's not just that.—Ganymede! Wake up!

(Rosalind recovers.)

Rosalind: Take me home now.

Celia: Yes, yes, my dear. *(To Oliver)* Help him, will you.

Oliver: Sure. *(To Rosalind)* Come on, lad. A gentleman shouldn't faint like that.

Rosalind: Yes, you're right.—Please don't tell Orlando I fainted. It's too embarrassing.

Celia: You look pale, brother. We'll go home now.—Oliver, come with us.

Oliver: Gladly.

(They all leave.)

Act 5, Scene 1. *Touchstone and Audrey are in the forest.*

Touchstone: We'll get married soon, my dear. Don't worry.

Audrey: I don't know why Sir Oliver couldn't marry us.

Touchstone: Never mind about that. We'll get someone higher-ranking to marry us.

Audrey: What did you mean when you told him "next time"?

Touchstone: I was joking, dear.

Audrey: Oh. All right, then.

Touchstone: By the way, what about that bumpkin boyfriend of yours?

Audrey: You mean William? He's not my boyfriend. He just has a crush on me.—Oh. Here he is.

(William comes in.)

William: Hello, Audrey.

Audrey: Oh, hello, William.

William: Good evening, sir.

Touchstone: Hello. So you're William. I've heard all about you.

William: Oh. That's nice, sir.

Touchstone: How old are you?

William: Twenty-five, sir.

Touchstone: Born and raised in the country, were you?

William: Yes, sir.

Touchstone: How high?

William: How high, sir?

Touchstone: If you were raised, then presumably you began at a lower level and ascended to a higher one.

William (Baffled): I was merely brought up, sir.

Touchstone: Brought up from where? A ravine? A ditch? A coal mine? The pits of hell?

William: Well, I—I can't be sure, sir. I can't remember back that far.

Touchstone: That's all right. Never mind. So are you rich?

William: Neither rich nor poor, sir. Somewhere in between, I would imagine.

Touchstone: Good. You have every right to imagine. And are you a wise fellow?

William (Pausing to think): I think so, sir.

Touchstone: Only a fool thinks he's wise. But you have the right to think, just like any dumb animal.

William: Oh—Thank you, sir.

Touchstone: So, do you love this girl?

William: Yes, sir. Very much.

Touchstone: And are you educated?

William: I'm afraid not, sir.

Touchstone: Fine. Then I will teach you something. Possession is nine-tenths of the law. The other tenth is hope. Do you hope to marry this girl?

William: Yes, sir.

Touchstone: Well, I possess her now, so I can claim nine-tenths of her. But you only hope for her, so you can claim only one-tenth of her. Do you understand?

William: Well, I—I'm not sure.

Touchstone: Now try to reason this out with me. It may be hard for you, but try anyway. If you were to marry one-tenth of her, what good would that be to you?

William: Not very much, I suppose.

Touchstone: You wouldn't insist on cutting off one-tenth of her just so you could marry that part, now, would you?

William: No, sir.

Touchstone: Isn't it far more reasonable that you should relinquish your one-tenth to me so I can marry her as a whole person?

William: If you put it that way, sir—yes.

Touchstone: So if you really love her, you won't insist on cutting her up just so you can have your one-tenth.

William: No, no.

Touchstone: Good. Otherwise, I'd have to resort to physical means to protect her, and the law would be entirely on my side.

William: I understand, sir. At least, I think I do.

Audrey: Thank you, William. I shall always remember your kindness.

William: Oh—yes—well, then—goodbye, Audrey.

Audrey: Goodbye.

(William leaves. Then Corin comes in.)

Corin: Master Ganymede and Mistress Aliena are looking for you.

Touchstone: Yes, yes. Be right there.—Come along, Audrey.

(They all leave.)

Act 5, Scene 2. *Orlando and Oliver come in. Orlando has his arm in a sling.*

Orlando: You only just met the girl, and already you want to marry her?

Oliver: Yes.

Orlando: And you proposed to her?

Oliver: Yes.

Orlando: And she said yes?

Oliver: Yes. And you should be very happy.

Orlando: Oh, of course, I am. I'm happy for your sake.

Oliver: But you have another reason to be happy. You see—I've decided to leave everything to you—father's entire estate. I want to spend the rest of my life right here—with Aliena.

(Before Orlando can reply, Rosalind comes in, still as Ganymede.)

Rosalind: Hello. I hope I'm not interrupting.

Oliver: Not at all. I was just leaving—future brother!

(Oliver leaves.)

Rosalind: How are you feeling, Orlando?

Orlando: Oh, this? *(Indicating his arm)* It'll heal.—But not my heart. I'm quite sure you wouldn't have been able to cure me of—that particular ailment.

Rosalind: No. I should say your case is incurable.

Orlando: So—your sister—and my brother—

Rosalind: Yes. It was love at first sight. I'm all for it.

Orlando: Me, too. They can get married tomorrow. I'll invite the Duke. *(Sadly)* I'm really—quite happy—for my brother.—Still, I wish I were the one getting married—to Rosalind.

Rosalind: That could happen.

Orlando: How?

Rosalind: I have certain—shall we say—magical talents.

Orlando: Magical talents?

Rosalind: Oh, yes. You don't know what I can do. If you really love her, I can arrange for her to be there tomorrow.

Orlando: You can? You mean you know where she is?

Rosalind: Oh, yes. And I will produce her for you—*(Snaps her fingers)* like that! And you shall marry her.

Orlando: I think you're joking.

Rosalind: No, I'm not. You'll marry Rosalind at the same time that your brother marries Aliena.—And here come two other people in love—but not with each other. Phoebe loves me, and Silvius loves her.

(Silvius and Phoebe come in.)

Phoebe (To Rosalind): You shouldn't have told Silvius what was in that letter.

Rosalind: So what? He's the one who loves you. Why don't you take him?

Phoebe: He doesn't know the first thing about love.

Rosalind: Doesn't he?—What do you say to that, Silvius?

Silvius (More assertively than before): I know very well. To love is to think only of the one you love—to cry for her, to ache for her, to have no other reason to live but for her.—And that’s how I feel about you, Phoebe.

Phoebe: And that’s how I feel about Ganymede.

Orlando: And that’s how I feel about Rosalind.

Rosalind: And that’s how I feel—about no woman. But all of this confusion will get straightened out very shortly.

Orlando: With your magical talents, I suppose?

Rosalind: Exactly.—All of you be here tomorrow. You will all be satisfied, and every one of you will be married—as will I. Just trust me. If your love is sincere, be here, and I promise you a happy outcome.

Silvius: I’ll be here.

Phoebe: So will I.

Orlando: And so will I.

(They all leave.)

Act 5, Scene 3. *Touchstone and Audrey come in.*

Touchstone: Well, Audrey, tomorrow is the big day. We’re finally getting married.

Audrey: I can’t wait. Then I won’t be chaste any more, will I?

Touchstone: Not after I chase you, you won’t.

Audrey: Oh, but I won’t run from you.

Touchstone: Then you’ll be not-chased. So either way, it works out the way you want it.—Oh, here comes Lord Amiens to play for us.

(Amiens comes in with his guitar.)

Amiens: Hello!

Touchstone: Hello, Amiens. Since you have your guitar, why don’t you play us a romantic song.

Amiens: Certainly!

(Amiens plays something funny—either a very bad rendition of a popular song, or another gibberish song in a fake foreign language, or a combination of a popular tune with fake foreign lyrics. The Director can add his own touch, such as having a dead bird fall out of the sky or having Amiens get crapped on by a bird. After the song, they all leave.)

Act 5, Scene 4. *Duke Senior, Amiens, Jaques, Orlando, Oliver, and Celia come in. Celia is still posing as Aliena. Duke Senior and his party are now dressed in courtly attire.*

Duke Senior: Orlando, do you still think this fellow Ganymede is going to keep his promises?

Orlando: Well—he's a remarkable fellow. I want to believe he will.

(Rosalind, Silvius, and Phoebe come in.)

Rosalind: I'm glad to see everyone's here. Now just bear with me for a moment. *(To Duke Senior)* My lord Duke, if I bring your daughter Rosalind here, do you agree to let her marry Orlando?

Duke Senior: Nothing would make me happier than to see her marry the son of Sir Rowland de Boys.

Rosalind (To Orlando): And you still want to marry her?

Orlando (Rolling his eyes): Does the sun rise in the east and set in the west?

Rosalind (To Phoebe): And you still want to marry me?

Phoebe: It's the one thing I wish for.

Rosalind: But if for some reason you decide not to marry me, will you marry Silvius instead?

Phoebe: Yes. All right.

Rosalind (To Silvius): And you still want to marry Phoebe?

Silvius: Totally.

Rosalind: Good.—You will see how I make everything come out perfect for all of you.—Aliena, come with me.

(Rosalind and Celia leave.)

Duke Senior: You're right, Orlando. He is a remarkable fellow. And he reminds me of my daughter—don't you think?

Orlando: Yes, I thought so, too, my lord—immediately I met him. And he seems to have courtly ways, even though he claims he's lived here in the forest all his life. He says he has studied magic.

Duke Senior: We shall see.

(Touchstone and Audrey come in.)

Jaques: Oh, the two fools are here finally. Now Noah's Ark can leave.

Touchstone: Good morning, everyone.

Jaques (To Duke Senior): My lord, this is the fool I told you about. He claims he used to live at court.

Touchstone: Yes, indeed. A courtier. I like polite society. They're so polite.

Duke Senior (Laughing): You must stay with us, then.

Touchstone: Thank you, my lord.—And this is Audrey. We're getting married. We're all getting married today, it seems. Isn't that swell?

Jaques: Tell the Duke that story about the courtier and his beard.

Touchstone: Oh, yes, the courtier and his beard. Well, it was like this. There was a certain gentleman at court whose beard I didn't like very much. So I said to him, "Sir, your beard is too Spanish. You should change it." And he says, "What do you mean, too Spanish? It's nothing of the sort." And I say, "If you don't believe me, ask anyone." So he goes away, and a little while later he comes back and says, "You're wrong. I've been told it's not too Spanish." So I say, "Perhaps you're right. But now that I think about it, I have to say it's definitely too English." And he says, "What? Too English? Ridiculous!" So I say, "If you don't believe me, ask anyone." So off he goes, and a little while later he comes back and says, "You are mistaken. I am reliably advised that my beard is definitely not too English." So I say, "Yes, I can see that now. But now I'm quite sure that it's too Italian." And now he's getting quite angry, and he says, "What? Too Italian? Sir, you are offending me greatly!" So I say to him, "Go ask anyone if you don't believe me." And away he goes for the third time, and, sure enough, he comes back and he says, "Sir, you don't know your beards! My beard is definitely not too Italian! And furthermore, I've taken enough of your insults! I challenge you to a duel!" And he takes out his sword. And I say, "Wait a minute. You can't duel me with that sword." And he says, "Why not?" And I say—"It's too Spanish."—And he just gives me this long, hard look, because now he realizes I've been putting him on—and he just walks away.

(Everyone laughs. Then Rosalind and Celia return, now dressed as themselves, along with the character Hymen, the god of marriage, who is a player not previously seen by the audience.)

Duke Senior: Rosalind!—Celia!

Orlando: Rosalind!

Phoebe: Who are you? Where's Ganymede?

Rosalind: I used to be—Ganymede.

(Phoebe faints into Silvius's arms, but only briefly.)

Celia: And I used to be—Aliena.

(Oliver stands agape.)

Rosalind: And this—*(Presenting Hymen)* is Hymen—the god of marriage.

Orlando: A god! *(To Duke Senior)* She really does know magic!

Hymen: All right, quiet down, everyone. I have four couples to marry, so let's get this done as fast as possible.

(The couples pair up.)

Audrey: Don't we need a priest?

Touchstone: It's all right, my dear. A god outranks a priest. And I'm perfectly sure—well, more or less sure—that it's legal to be married by a god.

Hymen: Okay.—Orlando and Rosalind. (*Snaps his fingers*) You're married. Congratulations.—Oliver and Celia. (*Snaps his fingers*) You're married. Congratulations.—Silvius and Phoebe. (*Snaps his fingers*) You're married. Congratulations.—Touchstone and Audrey. (*Snaps his fingers*) You're married. Congratulations.—You may all kiss your brides. (*The couples kiss.*) Excellent. I'm outa here.

(*Hymen leaves.*)

Duke Senior: It's magic, all right. Is that the end of it?

(*Jaques de Boys rushes in.*)

Orlando: Jaques!

Oliver: Brother!

Orlando (To Duke Senior): It's our other brother, Jaques!

Duke Senior (To Jaques de Boys): You're Sir Rowland's son?

Jaques de Boys: Yes, my lord. I'm the middle one. And I bring you good news, sir.

Duke Senior: Good news? What good news?

Jaques de Boys: Your brother, Duke Frederick, was on his way with an army to put an end to you. But he met an old religious man on the way, and they had a long talk, and—

Duke Senior: And?

Jaques de Boys: Your brother is a changed man. He has repented. He's returning the throne to you, and all the lands he seized—and the same for everyone else who came with you. Everything will be returned. And your brother has vowed to give up the court and all worldly pursuits and lead a life of prayer and meditation.

Duke Senior: Thank God in heaven!—Everyone! We can go home! We're going home!

(*General cheering.*)

Jaques (To Jaques de Boys): Wait, sir. Do you mean that Duke Frederick intends to live like—a monk?

Jaques de Boys: Basically, yes.

Jaques: Then I will join him.

Duke Senior: You want to join him?

Jaques: Yes. If he could have such a conversion, I know I can learn a lot from him.—All of you have gotten what you want and deserve. Now this is my chance for a new life. This is right for me. I know I'll be happy.

Duke Senior: You happy! Imagine! Then I give you my blessing, Jaques. But do stay with us a while and celebrate.

Jaques: No, my lord. You have your celebration—and I'll have mine—a more spiritual one. I want to go and pack right away.—All of you—be happy in your new lives. Goodbye.

Others: Goodbye, Jaques.

(Jaques leaves.)

Duke Senior: And so we shall be happy.—Come along, everyone. There's food to be eaten, wine to be drunk, and lots of singing and dancing to be done.

(Everyone leaves except Rosalind, who remains behind to deliver the Epilogue directly to the audience.)

Rosalind: It's always nice when a male author lets a lady have the last word. It shows that he trusts her eloquence. Men are the bigger fools in love—which only means that women get most of the blame. So for the sake of both, we like to see a happy ending, in which men are ultimately rewarded for their suffering and women are forgiven for any cruelty. In a good play like this, both sexes will feel that they have been vindicated.—You are perhaps wondering how I conjured up a god on short notice. Well, it's a magical talent I have. And you have to believe it because you saw it with your own eyes. But I will tell you that magic should be used sparingly—and only when absolutely necessary. For we are all better off if we try to get what we want without it.—Thank you for your kindness.—And now it's time for me to go. I go to join—my sweet—Orlando!

(She leaves, skipping happily.)

END

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